

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS BELGRADE 000264

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SCE
NSC FOR BRAUN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [KIRF](#) [SR](#)

SUBJECT: VISIT TO U.S. BY MODERATE SERBIAN ORTHODOX
CHURCH LEADERS

1. (U) An official Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) delegation of generally moderate bishops is planning to visit Washington in mid-March. The bishops have requested meetings at the State Department and the White House, mainly to discuss the future status of Kosovo and the fate of SOC patrimony therein. As final status talks on Kosovo begin, this level of engagement with the constructive wing of the SOC would send a positive message to Serbia and the Serbian people that the U.S. takes seriously SOC concerns of church property issues and minority rights in Kosovo.

2. (U) This delegation, similar to the group that visited the U.S. in 2005, represents the relatively young and moderate voice within the SOC. If their schedules permit, we would recommend that Under Secretary Burns and Ambassador Wisner meet with delegation. We would also recommend meetings at the NSC. (As they requested in 2005, the delegation expressed hope that the President would be able to receive them.) They will also seek meetings on Capitol Hill. They are available to travel to New York, or possibly elsewhere, for meetings.

3. (U) The six-person delegation plans to arrive in Washington on March 13 or 14 and stay until the end of March. They will coordinate logistics through their embassy in Washington, including meetings with Congressional leaders. The SOC delegates include Bishop Teodosije of Lipanje, Bishop Grigorije of Zahumlje-Herzegovina, Bishop Jovan of Sumadija, Father Irinej, Professor Bogoljub Sijakovic, and assistant Miroslav Stanovlah.

MOORE